

# El Nino: Fact or Fiction?

Local weathercasters are reporting January 1998 as being one of the mildest winter months in history. Has it been the work

of gentle weather Gods or the result of El Nino, a south american weather phenominon? Enquiring minds want to know.

Meteorologist Mike Rosemark-KA9VMR will address those questions at the February 21st MARC meeting. As a flight service metorologist for the National Weather Service, Mike is responsible for watching the upper level winds that affect air travel into Indianapolis and over central Indiana. Making the transistion from winter to spring could have disasterous consequences for central

Indiana residents. Mike will talk about severe weather and what the NWS is forecasting for Johnson County. --MARC



## Olympic connection

Winter Games special event: Special event station 8NØWOG will operate from February 7 through February 22 during the XVIII Olympic Winter Games in Nagano Japan. The station will be sponsored by the Japan Amateur Radio League and will be available for operation by amateurs from any country. If you're planning to be in Nagano for the games, don't forget your Amateur Radio license. 8NØWOG will be at the Nagano City Warm-Hearty (Fureai-Fukushi) Center, 1714-5, Midori-cho, Nagano. Operating hours will be 0930 until 2100 JST. HF bands will include 160 through 10 meters, SSB and CW. The station also will operated on VHF and UHF.--The JARL News

## In This Issue:

News from the Prez

Ham Radio History

Time for a change

Remember when Feb. "1994"

Coping with a new callsign

# SPARK GAP

## Editor

Jack F. Parker, Sr., W8ISH

6 Summit Ridge Court

Greenwood, In. 46142

H. 317-881-0817

e-mail jparker@iquest.net

## Publisher

Anna Leser, Johnson County EOC

O. 736-9064

## Mailing & Circulation

Vernon Gill, N9QBO

H. 738-4575

## Membership Information

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club is a Franklin Based organization open to all Amateur Radio operators in central Indiana.

The MARC meets the third Saturday of each month in the training room of the Johnson County Emergency Operations Center at 1100 Hospital Road in Franklin, In.

The MARC operates a 2-meter repeater at 146.835 Mhz. Each club member has free access to the repeater and autopatch.

Annual dues are \$18.00. VE Testing follows each meeting from March through November.

Submit stories to the editor on disk or via e-mail by the 3rd of each month.

Send change-of-address info and membership application to the club treasurer @ MARC, P.O. Box 836, Franklin, In. 46131.

The Spark Gap is published monthly by the Mid-State ARC.



# CLUB OFFICERS

## President:

Rick Reneau, KB9NDF

H. 780-1803

## Vice President:

George Weimer, N9GW

H. 882-5081

## Secretary:

Marilyn Parton, N9TUK

H. 535-9910

## Treasurer/ARES:

Vernon Gill, N9QBO

H. 738-4575

## RACES Director:

Richard Jasinski, KB9LJM

H. 889-8962

## Repeater Trustee:

Dave Julian, WB9YIG

H. 887-9504

## Activities:

Jack Parker, W8ISH

H. 881-0817

## VE Team Coordinator:

Dave Wendt, KA9OOH

H. 974-1488

# CYBERSPACE

## Club Packet Station KB9LOC

**Location:** Johnson County EOC Amateur Radio Room

**Frequency:** 145.63 MHz

**Purpose:** To read and leave e-mail for club members

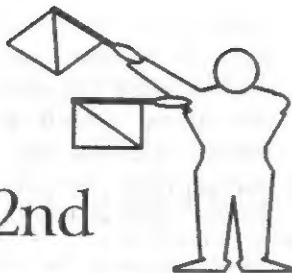
To be used for Health and Welfare traffic in emergencies

Can be used as Digipeter into WW9A and other packet nodes

**Connect:** Type KB9LOC-1 or EOCMBX or JOCO

# Novice Class

Starts March 2nd



It feels almost like Spring. And that new season signals the promise of new Amateur Radio Operators springing forth from the seeds of knowledge sewn in our annual Novice/Tech class. The 10 week class will begin Monday March 2nd at 7 PM in the EOC. Chief instructor Dave Wendt-KA9OOH has asked that as many club members as possible attend the first class session to be introduced and to help with general organization. Dave likes to kick the class off with a presentation of what a "real" ham radio operator looks and sounds like. So, come prepared to look like a real ham. Morse code will be taught to those who wish to study for their Tech-plus ticket. Prospective hams can sign up for the class by calling Dave Wendt at 974-1488. The class is free. All students are advised to purchase the "Now You're Talking" workbook for the class. -MARC

Don't forget your 1998 Dues

## Birthdays

David Wendt	KA9OOH	2/3
Joan Kemp	N9DON	2/11
Bob DeSpain	N9DE	2/13
Fred Bennett	N9TA	2/18
Homer Keesling	WB9OZZ	2/19
James Dezarn	KB9NSX	2/19
Ralph Talbott	N9RNI	2/19
Bob LaGrange	N9SIU	2/21
Christopher Vail	N9TFC	2/27

## Remember When...

From the February 1994 Spark Gap, Mac McCarty-NV9K, editor

- As governor of Indiana it gives me great pleasure to congratulate the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club on your ten year anniversary. Signed, Governor Bayh
- Just when you thought you knew it all, the National Weather Service has come up with a new and improved weather spotter course. It now includes winter weather events.
- The ARRL on January 6th petitioned the FCC to make Amateur Radio Operator Licenses valid for a lifetime. The League also said it was not proposing to make this rule change retroactive at this time, but, rather to extend currently held operator licenses from 10 years to lifetime.
- Tandy Corp. has opened it's first Radio Shack in Russia. The Moscow store is identical in look and layout to stores in the US according to Tandy.



## Coping with a new Call Sign

Changing your call sign entails a bit of housekeeping. For instance, if you have a new vanity call sign and are active on packet, you should alert the sysop of your packet BBS of your new on-air identity. You'll also need to change the call sign in your packet TNC firmware and in your ham radio software (communication and logging software, for example). If your call sign is also part of your e-mail address, you'll want to update that with your Internet service provider, as well. ARRL field appointees should alert section managers too. A new call sign also can mean a new club or ARRL field appointment badge, new QSL cards, new business cards (if they carry your call sign), and maybe new license plates. The list goes on. One thing you won't have to do is let ARRL HQ know. ARRL members' call signs are automatically changed as the FCC database is updated.--thanks to *This Week in Amateur Radio*

February

# From the Prez

---

Would you look at this! It's 1998 already. We must be having fun, because the time sure has flown!

I hope everyone had a good holiday season and that you had a great ending to 1997. I've been posted to an assignment that has had me driving back and forth to Bloomington everyday since late September, and it's starting to wind down to just a couple of days a week. Hopefully I'll have a little more spare time to devote to the hobby we all share in common.

---

## *I was WN9JTB*

---

Many of you know already that I was licensed back about 1970 or '71 (I've slept since then) as a Novice. My call back then was WN9JTB. That was in the days when a Novice was limited to crystal control and the ticket was only good for (I believe) 1 or 2 years. You either had to upgrade or lose it. A neighbor down the street helped me, coaching me on the study materials. He helped me understand "metrics" and the differences between -kilo and -milli anything. He was a General class operator and in those days a General could administer a test to a Novice candidate. The day came when he got the test materials from the FCC and I went down to his house to take the test. There were no pocket calculators, nor were there any study guides with question pools in the back. You had to really want to get a license to get a license. He sent me 5 minutes of code, using a newspaper for test material, and to my surprise he found 25 characters in a row that were copied correctly. I PASSED! To this day, I appreciate the effort he made on my behalf. There was nothing in it for him except for the personal satisfaction of sharing with me a hobby he found so rewarding.

---

## *Tapping CQ by the hour*

---

It took about forever to get my license. My tutor had a pretty neat Heathkit setup at his place down in his basement. He gave me a key to his basement

door and I would go down there after school and tap CQ by the hour. I would have to quit at 5:30 PM because the lady that lived in the other half of the house would get home and my CW would come booming out of her stereo. It wasn't a bad compromise, because I would have to go home for dinner and get my homework done anyway.

Unfortunately, he and his wife went their separate ways; they moved out and the radio was sold. After that I never got to touch a ham radio until 1996. For Christmas 1995 I received a copy of "*Now You're Talking*" from my brother (after he checked with my wife first). He told me the Mid-State club would be holding a Novice/Technician class



and that was the book used for the class. I thought about it and wavered off and on about whether I would take the class and whether I was up to dusting off the brain cells to remember all that -kilo and -milli stuff again.

---

## *What friends are made of..*

---

A month later, my father had a stroke and there was a lot of hours spent sitting in a hospital. I took that book with me and read it. Unfortunately, we lost our father, but I remember meeting a lot of you folks when you came to pay your respects. At that time I was impressed that so many of you would make the trip in the terrible weather we had at that time. I was amazed by the fact so many people would put forth that kind of effort on behalf of someone that simply shared a hobby. You knew my brother Dave, but many of you made the effort to speak to all the family members. I will always appreciate the kindness shown.

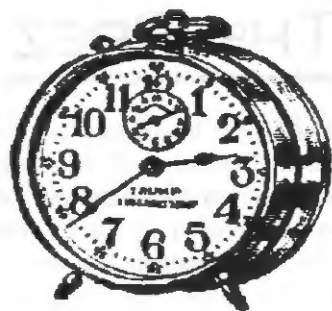
That episode was probably the single biggest factor that convinced me to take the class and get back into amateur radio. It was also the biggest factor in convincing me to join this club. This is a club with a heart, where there is a spirit of camaraderie.



# You're not a KID anymore when...

- Your back goes out more than you do.
- You quit trying to hold your stomach in, no matter who walks into the room.
- You buy a compass for the dash of your car.
- You are proud of your lawn mower.
- You call Olan Mills before they call you.
- Your arms are almost too short to read the newspaper.
- You sing along with the elevator music.
- You would rather go to work than stay home sick.
- You constantly talk about the price of gasoline.
- You enjoy hearing about other people's operations.
- You make an appointment to see the dentist.
- You know longer think of speed limits as a challenge.
- Neighbors borrow your tools.
- People call at 9 p.m. and ask, "Did I wake you?"
- You have a dream about prunes.
- You answer a question with, "Because I said so!"
- You send money to PBS.
- You still buy records, and you think a CD is a certificate of deposit.
- The end of your tie doesn't come anywhere near the top of your pants.
- You take a metal detector to the beach.
- You wear black socks with sandals.
- You know what the word "equity" means.
- You can't remember the last time you laid on the floor to watch television.
- Your ears are hairier than your head.
- You talk about "good grass," and you're referring to someone's lawn.
- You get into a heated argument about pension plans. You got cable for the weather channel.
- You have a party, and the neighbors don't even realize it.
- You fall asleep and people think you're dead.

# Time



# for a change

After eight years as Activity Director for one of the finest Amateur Radio Clubs in the country I am stepping down. Following the February meeting I will no longer accept the responsibility of finding guests for each monthly meeting or helping to coordinate special club projects. This decision comes as I begin to devote more time to personal and professional commitments.

At the same time I must make this the last issue of Spark Gap that I will edit and produce. It is time to close this chapter of the club's history by stepping down and passing the pen on to another club member. I feel confident that we can find a talented individual who will continue the high standards established by past editors of the Spark Gap. Many thanks to all of the club members that have contributed their stories to the newsletter. Keep up the good work, your new editor will need the input.

In closing, I must express my heart felt appreciation to two very special people that have spent countless hours copying, stacking, folding and mailing the Spark Gap. Over the past three years Vernon Gill-N9QBO and Anna Leser have brought it all together and delivered the Spark Gap to the post office in a timely manner. *Again, thank you.*  
-W8ISH

## Is this your last Spark Gap?

If you have not paid your 1998 dues but intend to re-new your membership be sure to notify Vernon Gill-N9QBO to keep you on the mailing list. Club membership keeps you in touch with your hobby. Don't let your membership and access to the autopatch expire! Vernon's telephone and address can be found on page 2 of Spark Gap.

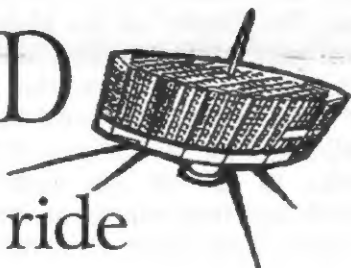
# THE PREZ

(cont'd from Page 4)

MARC will be starting its annual Novice/Technician class in March. I expect we'll make some new hams and perhaps pick up a few new members too. Looking at the membership roster, we have around 70 current members that are Novice, Tech, or Tech Plus licensees. It's good to keep recruiting new members into the hobby; but, what about offering a helping hand to existing licensees that wish to upgrade? I would like for the club to offer a General license class. A number of people have expressed interest in attending; enough I believe, to warrant a class. We have the candidates, what we need is TEACHERS. Notice I used the plural. We need 4 volunteers to teach this class. Two would concentrate on the theory and math and two would work on the CW portion. Would YOU be willing to volunteer? I guarantee there won't be anything in it for you except the satisfaction of knowing you've helped someone.

73 ES CUL DE KB9NDF

## Phase 3D Hitch'n a ride



Phase 3D Project Leader and AMSAT-DL President Karl Meinzer, DJ4ZC, has expressed a strong desire to European Space Agency officials for a Phase 3D launch aboard Ariane 503, which is set for sometime in May. Meinzer met January 20 in Paris with ESA officials to discuss including Phase 3D aboard the third test flight of the Ariane 5 launch vehicle.

AMSAT-NA Executive Vice President, Keith Baker, KB1SF, likened the situation to flying standby in order to get a seat on a fully booked airline flight. "That strategy often pays off," he added. Baker said this week that an international Phase 3D team has "been pressing ahead with getting the satellite flight ready" at the Phase 3D Integration Lab in Orlando, Florida. AMSAT says the ESA officials "indicated willingness to consider a launch on AR-503," but made no commitments, Meinzer said. AMSAT-NA officials have agreed that their job now is to get Phase 3D completed and tested, so that it will be ready to go if ESA gives the green light.--AMSAT News Service; Keith Baker, KB1SF



## Thomas told: No suit No ride

There were some tense times aboard Mir in February--not as a result of any more mechanical problems or computer crashes but because of what seemed to be an ill-fitting space suit. Ham astronaut Andy Thomas, *KD5CHF/VK5MIR*--who replaced Dave Wolf, *KC5VPF*, aboard the Russian space station--discovered he could not get into the custom-fitted space suit he'd need if he ever needed to use the Soyuz escape module in an emergency. That would have been a show-stopper, and, for a while at least, it looked as though Thomas might not get to stay aboard Mir until June after all.

### A suit makes the man

The problem was solved with a few adjustments to the suit. The space garb--called a Sokol suit--is only worn aboard the Soyuz and is not the same one astronauts and cosmonauts use during space walks. Thomas worked closely with Wolf to get oriented with the routine aboard Mir. It's not yet known how active Thomas will be on Amateur Radio. The Australian Communications Agency recently granted Thomas--an Australian-born engineer--the special event call sign *VK5MIR*.

### Wolf back on planet Earth

The shuttle Endeavour, which carried Wolf back to Earth, undocked from Mir on January 29 to return to Earth on January 31. Wolf, 41, said he was looking forward to returning to Earth and seeing his girlfriend again. Thomas, the seventh US astronaut to serve aboard Mir, might turn out not to be the last, as had been announced before his flight. NASA left open the possibility that more US astronauts might be stationed aboard the Russian space outpost after Russia requested further US participation. Duty aboard Mir is considered training for the International Space Station. But Russian delays on delivery of the ISS service module--where cosmonauts will live--pushed back all the launch dates. The first module of the ISS, built in Russia with US funds and originally scheduled to launch last November, now is set for launch on June 30. The ISS will replace Mir, which has been in service for almost 12 years.--ARRL Newletter

# MARC

## celebrates 14th Birthday



Fourteen years ago on February 18, 1984 a group of eighteen Amateur Radio operators assembled at the House of Franklin restaurant to create what was to become the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club. Paul Thomas-KA9DTH served as president pro-tem to establish the first set of officers to serve a 6 month term. Bill Fisher-KG9K was elected president; Joan Kemp-N9DON, vice president; Dan Cammack-W9MLN, secretary/treasurer; and Darrell Sego-KM9S as ARRL representative.

The dues were set at \$5.00 per year and regular meetings were to be on the third Saturday of every other month. The first order of business was to establish a weekly Sunday night net at 8:00 PM on 145.450 Mhz simplex. Plans for the first Field Day were discussed. It soon became apparent that monthly club meetings and executive board meetings for officers would be necessary for the club to prosper.

### Wendt 2nd Prez

At the March meeting Dave Wendt-KA9OOH became the second club president after Fisher-KG9K resigned due to job conflicts. Suggested names for the club were: Hoosier Amateur Radio Klub (HARK), Hoosier Amateur Radio Team (HART), Johnson County ARES (JOCARES), Ham Radio Operators Club (HROC) and of course Mid-State ARC.

At this meeting Darrel Sego-KM9S volunteered to check on available frequencies. Thus began the long drawn out process of selecting equipment, antenna, frequency and location.

The first actual club activity was a Fox Hunt in April 1984. "Foxy" Sandy Sanders-WA9RDF was the crafty fox. Tom

Carroll-N9AZD organized the hunt which lead to Paogi, Indiana. Paul Bohrer-W9DUU was the first to locate the transmitter.

By May 1984 a repeater was installed at the home of Tom Carroll using a frequency of 145.450 MHz. The club now had 25 members and voted to increase the dues to \$12.00 per year. The Sunday night net was established and changed to 7 PM. The short weekly net included the "Westlink Report" now called Newsline.

In September of '84 the first full term set of officers were elected: President Paul Thomas-KA9DTH, Vice President Joan Kemp-N9DON, Sec/Treasurer Tom Carroll-N9AZD and newsletter Editor Brad Stone-NB9M.

### High profile repeater

In 1985 the second Novice class was conducted by Dave Wendt-KA9OOH, the repeater moved to the old Whiteland water tower, the Kerchunker fund was established and the newsletter began publishing every other month. Plans were made to initiate VE testing while dozens of hams fanned out across Johnson county for the first "Goblin Patrol". Plans for the 1987 Pan Am games were developed.

In September 1985 the club gavel was passed to Jack Parker-N9EXK. The club made plans to relocate to the new EOC radio room where a packet BBS was established. Our own 190 foot tower was erected on the Whiteland Street Department property. New cavities, transmitter and controller were purchased in 1987 when we vacated the Whiteland site for the high profile 450 foot position on the WTTV tower in Trafalgar.

Our participation in the 1987 Pan American games lead to a regular gig at the Hoosier Park to assist in the cross country equestrian competition. The first event included 20-hams from Johnson, Marion and Bartholomew counties. We had a five camera amateur TV network that was fed to the judges and to the ATV repeater in Indianapolis. At fourteen years the club still has lots of room to grow. Make the next 10 months the best in the history of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club. --MARC

## ELMER

BY  
RICH  
REGENT  
K9GDF

